



Maricopa County Animal Care & Control



Thinking of adopting a Teenage Rottweiler

Teenage Rottweilers

As rescuers, we get to see or hear about all the problems teenage Rottweilers can bring to a home and all the love and joy as well. Before adding a teenage or preteen (6 months to 2 years of age) Rottweiler to your home please do a lot of research, not only on the Rottweiler as a breed but also into your own lifestyle and expectations for a dog.

Teenage and preteen Rottweilers are full of themselves and then some! At about 6 months of age they stop being bitey little fuzz balls and start to really get into trouble! This is the age when they start jumping up on people, getting into the trash and chewing on your furniture. If not trained, played with and exercised enough and if you confined properly when unsupervised they can destroy a home or apartment in one day!

We generally recommend that Rottweilers up to 2 years of age (and sometimes beyond) be crated when not supervised to keep them out of mischief. Some of the naughty things teenage Rottweilers have done to people's homes when left loose and unsupervised are: Chewed the corners off 100 phonographs; chewed up not one but 2 new pairs of shoes; chewed up every single pair of dirty underwear in the laundry basket; torn the linoleum up from the entire kitchen floor; chewed the legs off the dining room table; dug up and chewed in half the satellite dish cable; taken the vinyl siding off the back side of the house and chewed the wood molding off several places in the home. Every single one of these incidences could have been avoided by simply crating or supervising the young Rottweiler.

Teenage Rottweilers are very intelligent. So much so that it is sometimes a huge burden for the owner. These pups can and go get bored very easily and bored dogs are destructive dogs. The more intelligent the dog (of any breed) the more easily bored and then destructive they become. So if you want a dog that will just patiently lie around your home or yard until you invite it to do something; then perhaps an older well-trained Rottweiler or dog of another breed is more suited to you.

Teenage Rottweilers also like to see just how far they can push the rules and still get away with the behavior! If one day they experiment with a tiny growl when they are eating and people back away, then

this encourages them to greater extremes. If they shove you out of the way to get out of the car and you say nothing then they will continue to do that. They learn bad things way quicker than the things you want them to learn!! Going to obedience classes or training the dog yourself consistently and often keeps life in order. Rules are not made for your dog to break. Rules must be set and enforced by ALL members of the family. Sometimes getting the humans to all agree and comply with enforcing the rules is harder than getting the dog to follow them. Physical force is a bad idea as a rule BUT consistency, fairness and firmness are a must! If you are a really laid back, non-confrontational or soft-natured person then a Rottweiler, ESPECIALLY a teenager, is NOT the dog for you! If you are a leader-type, someone who can step in and take control of a situation while keeping a level head, then read on.

Rottweilers mature mentally very slowly! The housebreaking, crate training and chewing may be over with by 12 months old. But the Rottweiler is a puppy until it is 2 years old! They require AT LEAST every other day training sessions. They also require a lot of exercise and mental stimulation. Through Rottweilers under 2 should never be jogged or biked they should get lots of play time every day and walking or swimming is fine as long as you know the distance your teenager can easily walk or amount of swimming he can do without getting exhausted. Over-tired pups and teenagers can easily injure their joints and ligaments. If you're your Rottweiler is being especially wild and naughty, then it needs more exercise and training sessions. Boredom, lack of play time/exercise, and lack of mental stimulation are the three biggest causes of bad behavior!!

Rottweilers also mature very slowly physically. This means that they should be kept lean. If they don't have a visible waist or you cannot easily feel their ribs, the dog is way to fat! Rottweilers do not finish filling out width wise till 3 or 5 years old! Overfeeding WILL NOT make them fill out faster but will make them more susceptible to pain from hip dysplasia or arthritis, shoulder ailments and torn knee ligaments.

If after reading all the above you still want a teenage or preteen Rottweiler then by all means get one. But remember the commitment you are making to this dog. You are promising to properly care for, train, feed and exercise him for his entire life (8 to 12 years) while keeping in mind all the above things that make this dog a Rottweiler.

For more information on animal care, behavior or AC&C programs contact (602) 506-PETS or visit pets.maricopa.gov

